



Clean Air Washington

The Clean Air Washington Act of 1991 sets a comprehensive new course toward cleaner air throughout the state.

Motor Vehicle Emission Check Program

The problem

Motor vehicles are Washington's largest air pollution source, accounting for more than 50 percent of the statewide total, or nearly 1.3 million tons of air pollutants per year. The urban areas of Clark, King, Pierce, Snohomish and Spokane counties exceed the federal health standard for carbon monoxide, largely because of motor vehicle pollution. Motor vehicle emissions in King, Pierce, Snohomish and Clark counties are a major reason why these counties exceed federal ozone pollution standards. At the same time, vehicle use is growing two to three times faster than Washington's rate of population increase, undoing past vehicle emission control accomplishments.

One solution: motor vehicle emission checks

The goal of the vehicle emission check is to ensure that all factory installed emission control systems are working properly. Federal law requires this in areas where carbon monoxide and ozone pollution exceeds federal health standards. The emission check identifies the most polluting vehicles and requires proper repair of these vehicles.

The program applies to vehicles registered in the urban areas of King, Pierce, Snohomish, Spokane and Clark counties.

Every other year vehicles more than five and less than 25 years old must pass an emission test or spend a given amount in repairs to be re-registered. The inspection fee of \$15 is paid by cash, check, or credit card at the inspection station. There is no charge for the first re-test of a vehicle that fails the initial test.

What Clean Air Washington has done

- **Allowed** the vehicle emission check program to be enhanced and expanded, as required by federal law.
- **Included diesel vehicles** in the motor vehicle emission check program.
- **Changed the waiver requirement.** One hundred dollars must be spent on proper diagnosis and repair of a pre-1981 vehicle that fails a retest before a waiver can be granted preventing further expense to a vehicle's owner. For 1981 and newer vehicles the limit is \$150. The waiver does not apply for:
 - vehicles with tampered or removed emission control equipment; or

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- vehicles repaired by someone other than a Department of Ecology Authorized Emission Specialist.
 - **Requires** an emission check before a new owner can change registration of that vehicle if purchased from a private party or from outside the state.
 - **Requires** annual emission check of all state and local government vehicles in the check areas. It also requires the emission check of state vehicles statewide when 20 or more are kept at the same location.

For more information

Ecology has prepared fact sheets on each major element of Clean Air Washington. Any or all of these are available from the Washington State Department of Ecology, PO Box 47600, Olympia, WA 98504-7600.

For more information, please contact:

In Clark and Pierce Counties: 1-800-453-4951

In King and Snohomish Counties: (425) 649-7021 or 1-800-272-3780

In Spokane County: Please ask for the Emission Check staff
on call at (509) 456-4454

If you have special accommodation needs or require this document in alternative format, please call Judy Beitel, Air Quality Program (360) 407-6878 (voice); or (360) 407-6006 (TDD only).

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